

Soccer – Shenandoah Valley United (SVU), formerly Harrisonburg Soccer Association, was created to promote and organize soccer in Harrisonburg City, Rockingham County and the surrounding area. Begun in 1995, the league averages 600 players in recreational programs and 150 in travel programs each year. SVU is a member of the Virginia Youth Soccer Association (VYSA), an affiliate of the U.S. Youth Soccer Association.

The primary goal is to develop soccer skills, foster proper attitudes toward competition and sportsmanship, learn respect for rules, the value of teamwork, self-discipline, and gain self-confidence through improved soccer skills. Most importantly, SVU provides a fun and satisfying experience for all involved in the program—players, coaches, referees and parents. The program offers an excellent opportunity to make new friends and provides a wholesome and safe environment to develop skills and be active. Three leagues, Recreational, Travel and Academy are offered within SVU.

The **Recreational League** is open to ages 4–18, who have the desire to play soccer regardless of ability (beginner to experienced). The intent is to maximize player enjoyment and promote player development through smaller-sided games, more contact with the ball and greater time on the field. The season consists of one practice and one game per week. Games are scheduled Friday night or Saturday on fields at Spotswood Elementary School or the Smithland Road Soccer Complex. Players are placed by age group on teams, with co-ed and girls-only options. SVU Recreational League is not a competitive league—no results are published, standings tabulated, or champions. Uniforms are provided, but the player must supply shin guards (mandatory) and cleats (optional, but recommended). Coaches are volunteers.

The Fall Season begins August 18 with games continuing through November 1. Registration is now open with an Early Bird discount through June 20. A late fee is imposed on any registration received after July 20 with a cutoff date of August 1.

The **Travel League** provides an opportunity for athletes ages 10–18 to play in a more competitive environment and enhance skill development. Playing on an SVU travel team requires a fall and spring season commitment by the player and his or her family. Practices begin late August and typically meet twice a week. The Travel season involves 8–10 games (half home and half away) and the fall season runs September– October. The Spring season runs from mid-March through the first week in June. Travel teams participate in the Charlottesville-based Skyline Soccer League with travel generally limited to one hour from Harrisonburg. While games usually take place on Saturdays and some Sundays, rescheduled games could occur mid-week. Players should also expect to participate in tournaments which usually fill an entire weekend, most often on holidays such as Memorial Day, Labor Day or Columbus Day.

Travel Soccer is open to all children ages 10 to 18 and requires a tryout for player selection. Teams will be fielded for U11 and up provided enough players are accepted during tryouts. Virginia Youth Soccer Association sanctions age groups from August 1 to July 31. Players will play in designated division according to birth date. Playing up only at approval of director of coaching.

The **SVU Academy** has designed and developed a pathway for players from U9-U10 to progressively take their game to the next level, simply called The Academy. Our goal is to ignite interest in the players that enjoy the game and to take serious players to the college level and beyond. The Academy teaches the principles of soccer through a well-structured curriculum ensuring technical excellence with an added focus on early team tactics through increasingly pressurized situations and enjoyable small-sided games. Academy provides a positive and fun soccer experience and works to inspire and prepare young players to participate on the SVU Travel Teams.

Organization

- Academy style training twice a week by staff coaches
- Weekly small-sided games (optimizes touches on the ball, age-appropriate game awareness, "The Game is the best teacher")
- Weekly technical skills and fundamentals circuit training
- 8 vs. 8 games
- SVU U9 & U10 Tournament at Smithland Soccer Complex (spring)
- Area tournament play (fall and spring)

Please reference the SVU website at www.ShenValleySoccer.com for more details, fees, registration and an opportunity to volunteer.